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Constitution  
of  
The National  
The Sons of the  
American Revolution

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# CONSTITUTION

OF

## The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

*(Adopted at the Denver Congress, June 3, 1907; amended at Toledo Congress, May 2, 1910)*

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### ARTICLE I.—NAME.

The name of this organization shall be "The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution."

### ARTICLE II.—PURPOSES AND OBJECTS.

The purposes and objects of this Society are declared to be patriotic, historical, and educational, and shall include those intended or designed to perpetuate the memory of the men who, by their services or sacrifices during the war of the American Revolution, achieved the independence of the American people; to unite and promote fellowship among their descendants; to inspire them and the community at large with a more profound reverence for the principles of the Government founded by our forefathers; to encourage historical research in relation to the American Revolution; to acquire and preserve the records of the individual services of the patriots of the war, as well as documents, relics, and landmarks; to mark the scenes of the Revolution by appropriate memorials; to celebrate the anniversaries of the prominent events of the war and of the Revolutionary period; to foster true patriotism; to maintain and extend the institutions of American freedom, and to carry out the purposes expressed in the preamble of the Constitution of our country and the injunctions of Washington in his farewell address to the American people.

### ARTICLE III.—MEMBERSHIP.

SECTION I. Any man shall be eligible to membership in the Society who, being of the age of twenty-one years or over, and a citizen of good repute in the community, is the lineal descendant of an ancestor who was at all times unfailing in his loyalty to, and rendered active service in, the cause of American Independence, either as an officer, soldier, seaman, marine, militiaman or minute man, in the armed forces of the Continental Congress, or of any one of the several Colonies or States, or as a signer of the Declaration of Independence; or as a member of a

Committee of Safety or Correspondence; or as a member of any Continental, Provincial, or Colonial Congress or Legislature; or as a recognized patriot who performed actual service by overt acts of resistance to the authority of Great Britain.

SECTION 2. Applications for membership shall be made to any State Society, in duplicate, upon blank forms prescribed by the Board of Trustees, and shall in each case set forth the name, occupation and residence of the applicant, line of descent, and the name, residence and services of his ancestor or ancestors in the Revolution, from whom he derives eligibility.

The applicant shall make oath that the statements of his application are true, to the best of his knowledge and belief.

Upon the approval of an application by the State Society, to which it is made, one copy shall be transmitted to the Registrar General of the National Society, who shall examine further the eligibility of the applicant. If satisfied that the member is not eligible, he shall return the application for correction.

Until the State Society shall satisfy the Registrar General of the eligibility of such applicant, his name shall not be placed on the roll of membership.

SECTION 3. The official designation of the members of The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution shall be "Compatriots."

#### ARTICLE IV.—NATIONAL AND STATE SOCIETIES.

SECTION 1. The National Society shall embrace all the members of the State Societies of the Sons of the American Revolution now existing or which may hereafter be established under this Constitution.

SECTION 2. Whenever in any State or Territory in which a State Society does not exist, or in which a State Society has become inactive, or failed for two years to pay its annual dues to the National Society, fifteen or more persons duly qualified for membership in this Society may associate themselves as a State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, and organize in accordance with this Constitution, they may be admitted by the Board of Trustees to the National Society as "The ——— Society of the Sons of the American Revolution," and shall thereafter have exclusive local jurisdiction in the State or Territory or in the District in which they are organized, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, but this provision shall not be construed so as to exclude the admission of candidates residing in other States.

SECTION 3. Each State Society shall judge of the qualifications of its members and of those proposed for membership, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, and shall regulate all matters pertaining to its own affairs. It shall have authority to establish local Chapters within its own jurisdiction, and to endow the chapters with such power as it may deem proper, not inconsistent with the charter of the National Society or with this Constitution. It shall have authority, after due notice and impartial trial, to expel any member who, by conduct unbecoming a

gentleman, shall render himself unworthy to remain a member of the Society.

SECTION 4. Each State Society shall submit to the Annual Congress of the National Society a report, setting forth by name the additions, transfers and deaths, and any other changes in the membership and the progress of the State Society during the preceding year, and making such suggestions as it shall deem proper for the promotion of the objects of the National Society.

SECTION 5. Whenever a member in good standing in his Society shall change his residence from the jurisdiction of the State Society of which he is a member to that of another, he shall be entitled, if he so elects, to a certificate of honorable demission from his own State Society, in order that he may be transferred to the State Society to whose jurisdiction he shall have changed his residence; provided, that his membership shall continue in the former until he shall have been elected a member of the latter.

Each State Society shall, however, retain full control of the admission of members by transfer.

SECTION 6. Whenever the word "State" occurs in this Constitution, it shall be held to include within its meaning the District of Columbia and the Territories of the United States.

SECTION 7. A Society may be formed in any foreign country by fifteen or more persons who are eligible to membership under this Constitution, which shall bear the same relation to the National organization as the State Society, subject to the provisions of this Constitution.

#### ARTICLE V.—OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES.

SECTION 1. The General Officers of the National Society shall be a President General, five Vice-Presidents General, the order of seniority among whom shall be determined by lot at the time of their election, a Secretary General, Treasurer General, Registrar General, Historian General, and Chaplain General, who shall be elected by ballot by a vote of a majority of the members present and entitled to vote at the annual meeting of the Congress of the National Society, and shall hold office for one year and until their successors shall be elected.

SECTION 2. The General Officers provided for in section 1, together with one member from each State Society, shall constitute the Board of Trustees of the National Society. Such Trustee from each of the several State Societies shall be elected annually at the Congress of the National Society, upon the nomination, or from a list of nominees, to be made by each of the State Societies and submitted to the National Society by the filing thereof with the Secretary of the National Society at least thirty days before the meeting of the Annual Congress of the National Society. And in the event that any one or more of the State Societies shall omit or neglect to make such nomination or submit said list of nominees, by the time herein required, then the President of the

State Society so in default, shall, *virtute officii*, be chosen as and become the representative of his State Society upon said Board.

SECTION 3. The Board of Trustees shall have charge of, and be charged with the care and custody of all property belonging to the National Society, and to that end shall be vested with the powers conferred by section 3 of the Act of Incorporation of the National Society: *Provided, however*, That it shall not have the power to sell, convey, or in any wise encumber any real estate belonging to the Society without the assent of three-fourths of the members of said Board. The Board of Trustees shall also have authority to adopt and promulgate the By-Laws of the National Society, to prescribe the duties of the General Officers, to provide the seal, to designate and make regulations for the issue of the insignia, and to transact the general business of the National Society during the intervals between the sessions of the Congress.

Meetings of the Board of Trustees may be held at the call of the President General, or in case of his absence or inability, at the call of the Senior Vice-President General, certified by the Secretary General. Meetings shall be called at the request of seven members. At such meetings seven shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION 4. An executive committee of seven, consisting of the President General as chairman, and six members to be nominated by him and approved by the Board of Trustees, shall, in the interim between the meetings of the Board, transact such business as may be delegated to it by a Congress of the Society or the Board of Trustees.

#### ARTICLE VI.—DUES.

Each State Society shall pay annually to the Treasurer General, to defray the expenses of the National Society, fifty cents for each active member thereof, unless intermitted by the National Congress.

All such dues shall be paid on or before the first day of April in each year for the ensuing year, in order to secure representation in the Congress of the National Society.

#### ARTICLE VII.—MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS.

SECTION 1. The Annual Congress of the National Society for the election of the General Officers and for the transaction of business shall be held on the thirtieth day of April or on the first day of May in each year. The place of such meeting shall be designated by the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 2. Special meetings of the Congress may be called by the President General, and shall be called by him when directed so to do by the Board of Trustees, or whenever requested in writing so to do by at least five State Societies, on giving thirty days' notice, specifying the time and place of such meeting and the business to be transacted.

SECTION 3. The following shall be members of all such annual or special meetings of the Congress, and shall be entitled to vote therein:

(1) All the General Officers and the ex-Presidents General of the National Society.

(2) The members of the Board of Trustees and the President or Senior Vice-President of each State Society.

(3) One delegate at large from each State Society.

(4) One delegate from every fifty members of the Society within a State and for a fraction of twenty-five or over.

SECTION 4. After the adjournment of the Eighteenth Annual Congress of this Society, State Societies shall be represented at meetings of the National Society only by members of their own State Society, either duly elected, or who in the absence of regularly elected delegates, may be chosen by the regularly elected attending delegates of such State Society from the members of such State Society who may be present at any meeting of the National Society.

#### ARTICLE VIII.—PERMANENT FUND.

SECTION 1. There shall be created and maintained a Permanent Fund of the Society, the income or interest from which shall be covered into the general treasury of the Society and available for the general purposes of the Society, but the principal of which shall be maintained intact, and shall only be used or diminished upon the unanimous recommendation of the Executive Committee, approved by the Board of Trustees, and ratified by a four-fifths vote of the delegates present at the annual or special Congress to which such recommendation of the Executive Committee shall be reported.

SECTION 2. The permanent fund shall be composed of all legacies or donations to the Society, where no other application of the funds is designated by the testator or donor, all commissions received from the sales of badges, rosettes and ribbon, and such sum or sums as may from time to time by the Executive Committee be transferred to such fund from the general funds of the Society.

SECTION 3. The permanent fund shall be invested in securities authorized to be held by Savings Banks in Massachusetts, Connecticut, or New York, and any premium paid in purchasing such securities shall be repaid from the first income received.

#### ARTICLE IX.—AMENDMENTS.

This Constitution may be altered or amended at any meeting of the Congress of the National Society, provided that sixty days' notice of the proposed alterations or amendments, which shall first have been recommended by a State Society, or by a prior Congress, or by the Board of Trustees, or by the Executive Committee of the National Society, shall be sent by the Secretary General to the President of each State Society.

A vote of two-thirds of those present shall be necessary to their adoption.

#### ARTICLE X.

This Constitution shall take effect upon its adoption.



# BY-LAWS

OF

## The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution

*(Adopted at Denver Congress, June 3, 1907)*

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### ARTICLE I.—ELECTION OF OFFICERS.

All nominations of General Officers shall be made from the floor, and the election shall be by ballot. A majority shall elect. The nominations may be acted upon directly or may be referred to a committee to examine and report.

### ARTICLE II.—OFFICERS.

The duties of the General Officers shall be such as usually appertain to their offices, and they shall have such other duties as are hereinafter imposed or shall be delegated to them by an annual Congress or by the Board of Trustees.

They shall report at the annual meeting, and at such other times as they may be required to do so by the Board of Trustees.

### ARTICLE III.—PRESIDENT GENERAL.

SECTION 1. The President General, in addition to his general duties, shall be *ex officio* chairman of the Board of Trustees, and of the Executive Committee, and a member of every other Committee.

SECTION 2. At each annual meeting he shall appoint the following standing committees:

- Committee on Auditing and Finance,
- Committee on Credentials,
- Memorial Committee,
- Committee on Organization,
- Committee on Education.

The duties of the above committees shall be such as usually pertain to committees of like character, and such as may be defined by the Board of Trustees.



## ARTICLE IV.—VICE-PRESIDENTS GENERAL.

SECTION 1. In the absence of the President General, the Senior Vice-President General present shall preside at the Annual Meeting.

SECTION 2. In the prolonged absence or inability to act of the President General, the executive authority shall be vested in the Vice-Presidents General in order of precedence.

## ARTICLE V.—SECRETARY GENERAL.

The Secretary General, in addition to his general duties, shall have charge of the seal, and give due notice of all meetings of the National Society or Board of Trustees. He shall give due notice to all General Officers and State Societies of all votes, orders and proceedings affecting or appertaining to their duties. He shall distribute all pamphlets, circulars, rosettes, and supplies, as directed by the Board of Trustees.

## ARTICLE VI.—TREASURER GENERAL.

SECTION 1. The Treasurer General shall collect and receive the funds and securities of the National Society. He shall deposit the same to the credit of the "Society of the Sons of the American Revolution," and shall draw them thence for the use of the National Society, as directed by it or by the Board of Trustees, upon the order of the President General, countersigned by the Secretary General. His accounts shall be audited by a committee to be appointed at the Annual Meeting.

SECTION 2. He shall give bond for the safe custody and application of the funds, the cost of such bond to be borne by the National Society.

## ARTICLE VII.—REGISTRAR GENERAL.

The Registrar General shall keep a register of the names and dates of the election, resignation or death of all members of the several State Societies, and shall have the care and custody of all duplicate applications for membership. He shall issue upon the requisition of the Secretary or Registrar of the several State Societies certificates of membership and insignia to every member entitled thereto, through such Secretary or Registrar.

## ARTICLE VIII.—HISTORIAN GENERAL.

The Historian General shall have the custody of all the historical and biographical collections of which the National Society may become possessed and shall catalogue and arrange the same, and shall place the same in a fireproof repository for preservation.

## ARTICLE IX.—CHAPLAIN GENERAL.

The Chaplain General shall be a regularly ordained minister, and shall open and close all general meetings of the National Society with the services usual and proper on such occasions.

## ARTICLE X.—STATE SOCIETIES.

Every State Society shall—

(1) Notify the Secretary General of the election and appointment of all officers, nominees for Board of Trustees, and delegates.

(2) Pay to the Treasurer General on the first day of March or within thirty days thereafter, the sum of fifty cents for each active member thereof.

(3) Transmit to the Registrar General duplicate applications of all accepted members, and notify him of the resignation or death of all members thereof.

## ARTICLE XI.—BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

SECTION 1. The Board of Trustees shall prepare and carry out plans for promoting the objects and growth of the Society; shall generally superintend its interests, and shall execute such other duties as shall be committed to it at any meeting of the National Society. It shall have charge of the printing of the Diploma and the manufacturing of the Insignia, and shall determine the price at which the same shall be issued.

SECTION 2. It shall have the authority to admit or reorganize as a State Society any association of fifteen or more persons duly qualified for membership in the Society.

SECTION 3. It shall have power to fill any vacancy occurring among the General Officers, and an officer so elected shall act until the following annual election and until his successor shall be elected.

SECTION 4. It shall have authority to make, alter and amend the By-Laws as hereinafter provided.

SECTION 5. The President General may call meetings of the Board of Trustees at any time he may deem necessary, and shall call such meetings upon the written request of any five members thereof, provided that of any meeting, other than such as may be called during the session or immediately upon the adjournment of an annual or special Congress of the National Society, not less than five days' notice of the time and place of such meeting shall be given.

## ARTICLE XII.—EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Executive Committee may be called at any time by the President General, and such meeting shall be called upon the written request of three members thereof. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to exercise the powers, and perform the duties committed to it by any annual or special Congress or by the Board of Trustees; to control and supervise all arrangements for the holding of the annual or any special Congress, and the social and other functions connected therewith; it shall upon the request of the proper committee of the National Society or of the Board of Trustees, assist in the organization of new State Societies, and increasing the membership of weak State Societies, and for these purposes may incur its necessary expenses, limited to such

amounts as may be in the Treasury unappropriated, and not required for the current expenses of the National Society during the year.

#### ARTICLE XIII.—SEAL.

The seal of the Society shall be two and three-eighths of an inch in diameter, charged with the figure of a minute man, grasping a musket in his right hand, and surrounded by a constellation of thirteen stars, who shall be depicted in the habit of a husbandman of the period of the American Revolution, and as in the act of deserting the plough for the service of his country; the whole encircled by a band three-eighths of an inch wide, within which shall appear the legend, "National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, organized April 30, 1889."

#### ARTICLE XIV.—CERTIFICATES.

All members of this Society, wherever admitted, shall be entitled to a certificate of membership duly attested by the President General, Secretary General and Registrar General, countersigned by the President, Secretary, and Registrar of the State Society to which such member shall have been admitted.

#### ARTICLE XV.—INSIGNIA.

The insignia of the Society shall comprise (1) a cross surmounted by an eagle in gold, (2) a rosette.

SECTION 1. The cross shall be of silver, with four arms, covered with white enamel and eight gold points, same size as a Chevalier's Cross of the Legion of Honor of France, with a gold medallion in the center bearing on the obverse a bust of Washington in profile, and on the reverse the figure of a minute man, surrounded by a ribbon enameled blue, with the motto "Libertas et Patria" on the obverse, and the legend "Sons of the American Revolution" on the reverse, both in letters of gold. The cross shall be surmounted by an eagle in gold and the whole decoration suspended from a ring of gold by a ribbon of deep blue, with white and buff edges, and may be worn by any member of the Society on ceremonial occasions only, and shall be carried on the left breast, or at the collar if an officer or Past President General of the National Society, or the President, active or past, of a State Society.

SECTION 2. The rosette shall be seven-sixteenths of an inch in diameter, of usual pattern, displaying the colors of the Society, blue, white, and buff, and may be worn by all members at discretion in the upper left-hand buttonhole of the coat.

#### ARTICLE XVI.—INDEBTEDNESS.

No debts shall be contracted on behalf of the National Society. Every obligation for the payment of money, except checks drawn against deposits, executed in the name or on behalf of the National Society shall be null and void.

## ARTICLE XVII.—ORDER OF BUSINESS OF THE ANNUAL CONGRESS.

1. Calling the Congress to order by the President General.
2. Opening prayer by the Chaplain General.
3. Appointment of a Committee on Credentials.
4. Remarks by the President General on condition and needs of the Society.
5. Report of Committee on Credentials.
6. Reading of minutes of the last Congress.
7. Report of Board of Trustees.
8. Reports of General Officers.
9. Reports of standing committees.
10. Reports of special committees.
11. Reports of State Societies.
12. Old and unfinished business.
13. New business, including election of officers and Trustees.
14. Adjournment.
15. *Provided*, That for a special purpose the Congress may, by a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting, suspend the above order of business.

## ARTICLE XVIII.—AMENDMENTS.

These By-Laws may be altered or amended by a vote of three-fourths of the members present at any meeting of the Board of Trustees, notice thereof having been given at a previous meeting.













LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



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